

Message Text

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17

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 EB-07 FRB-03 INR-07

NSAE-00 USIA-06 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 SP-02 CIEP-01

LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 NSC-05 SS-15 STR-04 CEA-01 L-03

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FM USINT BAGHDAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2649

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USINT BAGHDAD 1310

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: ETRD, PINT, IZ

SUBJ: IRAQI MINISTRY OF ECONOMY DIVIDED

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED:

1. A PRESIDENTIAL DECREE ISSUED DECEMBER 24 DIVIDED THE IRAQI MINISTRY OF ECONOMY INTO TWO NEW MINISTRIES, ONE FOR INTERNAL TRADE AND ONE FOR FOREIGN TRADE. THE ENCUMBENT MINISTRER OF ECONOMY, HIKMAT

AL-AZZAWI, WAS APPOINTED MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE AND ACTING MINISTER

OF INTERNAL TRADE. END UNCLASSIFIED.

2. BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL: COMMENT: THE MOVE PROBABLY REFLECTS INCREASING CONCERN BY THE RCC OVER IRAQI CHRONIC SUPPLY SHORTAGES AND INADEQUATE SUPPLY PLANNING. QUEUING FOR EGGS, MEAT, MILK, AND EVEN BREAD, HAS BECOME A PROMINENT FEATURE OF LIFE IN BAGHDAD. CONSUMERS GOODS OF ALL TYPES ARE IN SHORT SUPPLY WHILE VARIOUS GOVERNMENT PURCHASING AGENCIES LAG BEHIND IN THEIR STRUGGLE TO SPEND THEIR BUDGET ALLOCATIONS.

3. THE MINISTRY OF ECONOMY HAS ALSO BEEN A BOTTLENECK IN THE
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IMPORT OF CAPITAL GOODS. POLITICALLY POWERFUL MINISTERS,

SUCH AS THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY WHO IS A MEMBER OF HE RCC,
HAVE ROUTINLY BY-PASSED THE MINISTER OF ECONOMY IN IMPLEMENTING
THEIR DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

4. MINISTRY OF ECONOMY IS ALSO KNOWN FOR ITS MORE IDEOLOGICAL
APPROACH TO ECONOMIC AFFAIRS. IT HAS BEEN SOMEWHAT OUT OF
STEP WITH THE MORE POWERFUL MINISTRIES ON SUCH
QUESTIONS AS TRADING WITH THE "IMPERIALIST" WEST. ALTHOUGH
AL-AZZAWI WILL APPARENTLY CONTINUE, AT LEAST FOR A WHILE, AS
MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE, THIS REDUCTION IN THE SCOPE OF
HIS MINISTRY WILL PROBABLY FORCE A REORGANIZATION OF HIS
PERSONNEL AND MAY HAVE EFFECT OF BRINGING HIS POLICIES MORE
INTO LINE WIT THE ESSENTIALLY PRAGMATIC ECONOMIC POLICIES
OF RCC. END CONFIDENTIAL.
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